

# Humphrey Perkins School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	137799
<b>Local authority</b>	Not applicable
<b>Inspection number</b>	388567
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Anstead HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	900
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brian Tetley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Nutkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>School address</b>	Cotes Road Barrow-upon-Soar Loughborough LE12 8JU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01509 412385
<b>Fax number</b>	01509 620902
<b>Email address</b>	p.nutkins@humphreyperkins.leics.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	11–14
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	388567



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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Anstead

Her Majesty's Inspector

Suha Ahmad

Additional inspector

John Burridge

Additional inspector

Jacqueline Pentlow

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 36 lessons taught by 34 teachers, including three mentoring sessions, and an assembly taken by the headmaster. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, its strategic plan and its analysis of performance data. The quality and challenge of pupils' written work and the quality of teachers' marking were checked during the lessons visited. The views of 334 parents and carers, a sample of 102 pupils and 27 staff expressed in questionnaires were taken into consideration. The lead inspector spoke to three parents by telephone.

## Information about the school

Humphrey Perkins School is larger than the average middle school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and around 5% of pupils are from several minority ethnic groups. There is a lower-than-average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, and the proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are average.

The school very recently converted to an academy and is now consulting parents, carers and the community on becoming an 11–16 school. The school has specialist status in the arts. The floor standards (set by the government for minimum levels of progress and attainment) do not apply to the age ranges currently provided for by the school.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to behaviour and safety.
- Although pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, progress is variable in other subjects, meaning achievement is satisfactory. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who need help with their reading are catching up, but slowly, because the impact of their phonics sessions (lessons where they are taught the correspondence between the sounds in words and how they are written) is not well evaluated.
- Some teaching is outstanding and some is inadequate but most is in between and so, on balance and over time, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is not good because generally pupils' work is not marked frequently enough and pupils have insufficient written guidance about how they might improve their work. Some teachers do not have the assessment information they need to be able to plan work of appropriate challenge for the differing needs of individuals within their classes.
- Behaviour and safety are inadequate because learning in some classes is regularly disrupted. This tends to occur in lessons where the tasks are uninteresting or where the teacher fails to operate the school's behaviour management policy properly.
- The headmaster is bringing about rapid change and taking the school in new directions. Aspects of achievement, and of behaviour and safety, are improving as a consequence of satisfactory leadership and management. The rate of improvement is slowed by weaknesses in the effectiveness of some senior and

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middle leaders.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by:
  - tracking the impact of phonics teaching to ensure pupils who need help with their reading catch up more quickly
  - increasing to at least good the progress pupils make in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring pupils' work is marked frequently and that marking shows pupils how to improve
  - helping teachers to use assessment information to plan work of an appropriate challenge for the range of needs in each class.
- Minimise disruption to learning in lessons by:
  - ensuring staff consistently implement the behaviour management policy
  - providing engaging activities for pupils with plentiful opportunities for them to learn actively.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels by spreading the good practice that exists among some senior and middle leaders.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry varies between broadly average and above average. Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics so that their attainment by the end of Year 9 in these subjects is above average. In 2011, although progress overall was good in English and mathematics, this masked the fact that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs only made satisfactory progress that year. An excellent tracking system shows these two groups of pupils are now making the same good progress in English and mathematics as other pupils. The progress of all pupils in other subjects is variable because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which sometimes lead to a lack of engagement and disruption to learning. Achievement overall is satisfactory.

The quality of learning for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is variable but generally satisfactory. In art and music lessons, pupils with special educational needs were seen to be making better progress than other pupils because either their needs were well catered for or they were particularly talented in the subject. A small number of lower-attaining pupils, who require additional help to improve their level of reading, receive individual coaching in the use of phonics. Assessments show that these interventions are helping this group of pupils to catch

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up, albeit rather slowly. This is partly because the gains made through the phonics interventions are not shared with class teachers, and there is insufficient oversight of how well the interventions are working.

Learning is best where there is variety and pupils can actively participate in tasks or work creatively. For instance, in a music technology lesson, different groups of pupils were spread about the school but were so engrossed in their learning that all stayed on task. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to use professional-quality equipment and learnt a great deal about how to 'mic up' a drum kit and guitar amplifiers. In contrast, though, learning is weaker and less enjoyable where teachers do not actively engage pupils, or where all pupils are given the same work to do. The pace is slower in such lessons, pupils become uninterested and sometimes misbehave. Almost all parents and carers feel their children are making good progress at the school. This is true for English and mathematics but not for some of the other subjects.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in English and mathematics is consistently good resulting in pupils making good progress in these subjects. The quality of teaching is more mixed in other subjects with examples of both outstanding and inadequate teaching seen. In an outstanding history lesson, for example, pupils were very well engaged by an interesting task in which they had to review original source material including photographs, newspapers of the time and extracts from a contemporary novel to identify the features of racial segregation in America during that era. Pupils worked in small groups to share their views about what the source material showed and their excellent behaviour, together with skilful prompting and use of questioning by the teacher, ensured the lesson proceeded at a fast pace. As well as learning about the importance of citing the sources of evidence in history, the lesson made an important contribution to pupils' understanding of the injustice caused by prejudice and inequality when a whole nation chooses to behave in this way.

Most teaching, however, is more mundane. Often pupils are given the same work to do despite the range of differing needs in the class, meaning that the work is too easy for some and too difficult for others. In part this is because teachers do not assess work frequently enough and also because there is not one consistent approach to planning learning to meet the needs of all in the class. Scrutiny of pupils' written work showed some good examples of marking but many books are not marked often enough. Consequently, pupils know their targets for at least one subject but almost all do not for most subjects. Pupils are often unclear about what they need to do to improve their work. Some teachers plan the development of pupils' literacy skills in subjects other than English with, for example, mathematics teachers insisting on pupils using the correct terminology like 'linear' in place of 'straight line graph'. There is little planned development of pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects.

Most parents and carers feel their children are well taught but some have concerns

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about the inconsistent quality of teaching. Inspection evidence supports these comments.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Attendance is above average overall, but last year it was very low for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has made strenuous efforts this year to raise the attendance of this group of pupils. Any absences are rigorously followed up and the school has explained to parents and carers the importance of good attendance for achievement. This approach has had considerable success. The attendance of this group has risen markedly, although it is still low in comparison with all pupils nationally.

Logs recording incidents of bullying and racist behaviour show occurrences are relatively high, but this is partly owing to the importance the school attaches to ensuring all incidences are properly recorded and followed up. Nevertheless, there are instances of unacceptable behaviour and a small number of pupils express unacceptable attitudes to others. A few parents, carers and pupils complained about bullying and prejudice-based behaviour, including racist and homophobic remarks. However, most pupils who spoke with inspectors said that incidences of such behaviour were uncommon and that when they did occur, they felt the school dealt with them well.

Over the last few years, the number of pupils excluded from school has been about twice as high as that seen nationally. The exclusion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has been disproportionately high. Last year the exclusion figure was halved through new approaches to managing behaviour and this improvement is being sustained this year.

High proportions of parents, carers, pupils and staff responding to a questionnaire (around one third in each case) expressed concerns about frequent disruption to lessons by a minority of pupils. Inspectors saw some incidents of low-level disruption in lessons but not at the level suggested by the questionnaires. It is clear, however, that behaviour over time is inadequate. Pupils understand the new behaviour management policy and are clear about how the system of 'red warnings' should be operated by teachers. They say that learning is most often disrupted in uninteresting lessons or where their teachers do not implement the behaviour management policy properly. This limits learning in subjects other than English and mathematics. Older pupils spoken to were adamant that behaviour over time has improved in lessons since the introduction of the new policy, and that disruptions to lessons are becoming less frequent.

### **Leadership and management**

The headmaster has been in post some 18 months and has had a testing start to his time at the school. A serious budget deficit has been resolved and spending aligned with income in just one year. He has built partnerships with local schools, converted

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the school to an academy and is leading preparations for its transition from middle school to secondary school in September 2013. His outstanding leadership and resilience in swiftly and effectively tackling this range of concurrent problems is impressive. The headmaster has embedded the systems and processes necessary to bring about rapid school improvement but recognises that there are inconsistencies in the effectiveness of senior and middle leadership. Most senior and middle leaders are positive about the headmaster's vision and ambition for the school, feel empowered to carry out their roles, and support the changes he is making. A questionnaire to all staff shows that they strongly believe the school is well led and managed. Members of the governing body have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide astute support and challenge to its leaders. The arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

A thorough review of the quality of teaching and learning has been conducted as part of performance management arrangements and informs the training provided to staff. Some teachers have the opportunity to visit other institutions to see good practice. The headmaster is running a leadership development course which some teachers attend and others are receiving training to improve their behaviour management skills.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and generally meets pupils' needs but there is insufficient development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills when working in subjects other than English and mathematics. The curriculum gives a high priority to promoting pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and to combating discrimination and inequality. Values are developed in assemblies and in daily 25 minute sessions through discussions which develop pupils' understanding of moral choices and awareness of other cultures.

Self-evaluation is detailed, accurate and informs strategic planning. The school knows itself well and is aware, for example, that the quality and timeliness of communication with parents and carers have not always been good enough. The impact of planned actions is carefully monitored and trends in data and comparisons with benchmark figures are regularly reported to the governing body. Attendance has improved and is now above average overall. The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has improved to be good as has the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. There are indications that a new behaviour management policy is reducing the disruption to learning some pupils have experienced and a budget deficit has been eliminated. All these factors show that the school has the capacity to improve.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Humphrey Perkins School, Barrow Upon Soar, Loughborough, LE12 8JU**

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we inspected your school. We found your school to be inadequate because of the disruption to learning by some of you during lessons. This is limiting the progress you could make. We have given the school a *notice to improve* your behaviour, which means an inspector will be coming to check on this. Over one third of you who responded to our questionnaire said that behaviour in lessons was only sometimes good or was not good very often. Your test results in English and mathematics show that you make good progress in these subjects but the progress you make in other subjects is mixed. The subjects where the teaching is consistently the best are English and mathematics. Although there is some good teaching in other subjects too, generally the quality of teaching you receive is satisfactory. Your attendance has improved to be better than is usually seen. The headmaster and senior staff are doing a satisfactory job of making your school better.

I have asked the headmaster to continue to improve the school by:

- ensuring you make better progress in reading and subjects other than English and mathematics
- making sure lessons are not disrupted and all teachers use 'red warnings' properly
- giving you more interesting work to do which is not too hard for some and too easy for others
- making sure teachers mark your books more often and give you guidance on how to improve your work
- helping other teachers to be as successful at improving the school as he is.

You can help by maintaining your good attendance record and by always trying your best in lessons.

With best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Anstead  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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